

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES \$150,000 FOR ONSLOW COUNTY BRAC EFFORTS
WILL HELP AREA PROTECT CAMP LEJEUNE AND MARINE CORPS AIR STATION**

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley announced today that Onslow County’s Committee of 100 will receive \$150,000 in state matching funds to help the community protect Camp Lejeune and the Marine Corps Air Station at New River from any potential base closings.

“As a state, we will work to preserve the military presence we currently have and to attract additional resources in the years to come,” Easley said. “Blending local assets with state efforts will help get this job done.

“North Carolina is positioned well to weather the BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) process, but we cannot rest on our laurels,” he said. “It is critical that we do all we can at both the local and state levels. Our efforts need to be coordinated and unified. We are all in this together.”

Last year, the General Assembly authorized the use of up to \$2 million for BRAC efforts. The Onslow County Committee of 100 will use the \$150,000 state match to protect the two bases and seek permanent location of the 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade at Camp Lejeune, implement the Coast Guard Special Mission Training Center to help with port security and establish a joint training facility for the MV-22 Osprey at New River Air Station.

Easley’s proposed 2004-05 budget includes \$1.5 million to help state and local efforts in the upcoming federal BRAC process, and \$500,000 more for Reach out to Communities (ROTC) to provide loan assistance and to prevent home foreclosures of military families. His budget also includes \$1.6 million in increased resources for the Small Business Technology Development Center, which could benefit businesses that serve the military and its employees.

The U.S. Department of Defense is preparing to announce a round of base closings early next year. More than 43,000 marines and sailors are stationed at Camp Lejeune and the Marine Corps Air Station at New River. The bases generate more than \$5.2 billion annually in economic impact through payroll, operations and outside contracts.

“The military plays such a vital role in both our local communities and economies,” Easley said. “I am committed to doing whatever it takes to keep our military viable, strong and growing here in North Carolina.”

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